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SUBJECT: TURKEY: UPDATE ON WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR  
INFORMATION

REF: A. STATE 158223

¶B. STATE 149663

¶1. Turkey continues its efforts to eliminate all forms of child labor, increasing access to basic and vocational education to improve the prospects of children currently working, and withdrawing them from employment while they are children. Post provides new information below in response to the request for updated information on those efforts conveyed in refs a and b, paragraph 9, sections A through E.

¶A. Laws and regulations proscribing the worst forms of child labor:

-- Turkey continued to implement provisions stipulated throughout Turkish law regarding the elimination of child labor, as well as its cooperative agreement with the ILO's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC), the commitment to which was extended in 2006 through September 2011. Turkey's efforts in this area are primarily coordinated through the GOT's Time-Bound Policy and Program Framework for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor, which is designed to totally eliminate the worst forms of child labor in Turkey by 2014. In addition, Turkey ratified the Council of Europe's Social Charter in October 2006, which further underscores the rights of children in Turkey. The employment of children and enforcement of restrictions on such employment is regulated through a number of laws, including the umbrella Labor Law, General Health Law, Police Duties and Authorities Law, Apprenticeship and Vocational Training Law, Primary Education and Education Law, Debts Law, Unions Law, and Social Security Law. Turkey ratified ILO Convention 182 in 2001 and has developed a list of occupations considered to be the worst forms of child labor as called for in Article 4 of the Convention. Three categories of child labor classified as worst forms of child labor are found in Turkey, including: seasonal agricultural work; dangerous conditions in small and medium sized enterprises; and, child labor in the streets. There were no new laws promulgated in 2007 specific to child labor.

¶B. Regulations for implementation and enforcement of proscriptions against the worst forms of child labor:

-- Turkish laws addressing the child labor issue contain implementation provisions which specifically mention public agencies in charge of implementation and monitoring. For example, Labor Law 4857 states that Ministry of Labor and Social Security inspectors are the responsible officials for the enforcement of child labor laws. There are 600 inspectors carrying out such duties throughout Turkey, all of whom have been trained to identify under-age children in the

workplace and avenues of redress in such instances. Legal remedies stipulated in several different articles of law include the removal of children from workplaces, fines levied against employers, and closure of places of business employing under-age children. There is an Emergency Action Plan on child labor and a nation-wide economic Development Plan -- the ninth in a series of such plans -- designed to map out GOT priorities and programs in the economic and social fields over the next six years. This Development Plan also incorporates efforts aimed at combating the worst forms of child labor.

-- The GOT continued to conduct awareness-raising and training activities for officials in charge of enforcing child labor laws.

**1C.** Whether there are social programs to prevent and withdraw children from the worst forms of child labor:

-- The GOT continues to provide care and rehabilitation services to children subject to the worst forms of child labor at 44 centers located throughout the country (up from 30 such centers in 2005).

-- With financial support from the European Union and technical support from the ILO, a project to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, administered by the Ministry of Labor and Social Services and initiated in 2005 in seven provinces (Cankiri, Elazig, Erzurum, Kastamonu, Ordu, Sinop, and Van), was completed in 2007. 4,460 children benefited from the project, with 1,830 teachers trained to help identify children at risk of dropping out of school through use of a school-based child labor monitoring system, and another 1,935 teachers and school administrators received education to raise their awareness of the problem.

-- In another EU-supported project supporting implementation of the Time-Bound Policy, efforts begun in 2005 in 20 different provinces (Adana, Ankara, Antalya, Batman, Bursa, Cankiri, Corum, Diyarbakir, Elazig, Erzurum, Gaziantep, Istanbul, Izmir, Kastamonu, Kocaeli, Mardin, Ordu, Sanliurfa, Sinop, and Van) were completed in 2007. Under the auspices of this project, over 25,000 children who were working or at risk of dropping out of school to work were directed to educational programs or provided incentives to remain in school. Parents of the children also received vocational training to increase their access to employment.

-- Turkey's largest labor union confederation, Turk-Is, and its largest employers union confederation, TISK, started a joint project in 2007 in Adana entitled "Societal Cooperation Project Against Child Labor." The project is designed to prevent children from becoming involved in the worst forms of child labor as well as to direct children who are exposed to such labor to basic education programs. The project specifically focuses on children in the agriculture and furniture production sectors, as well as those who work in the streets. The project, designed to continue for a period of 16 months, will bring rise to a joint Turk-Is/TISK Child Bureau to bring greater focus to the child labor problem.

-- In September 2007 TISK, in cooperation with ILO, organized a regional conference in Istanbul designed to enable participants to share experiences and lessons learned in the struggle to eliminate the incidence of child labor. Representatives of 12 countries in the region attended the conference and issued a declaration pledging determination to eliminate the child labor problem.

**1D.** Does the country have a comprehensive policy aimed at the elimination of the worst forms of child labor:

-- Information provided last year on the Time-Bound Program remains current, with awareness-raising efforts on the part of MOLSS' child labor unit continuing. The Ministry distributed information through various media, including calendars, handbooks, leaflets, magazines, and CDs to public institutions, labor union and employers union confederations

and other NGOs designed to raise the profile of the child labor issue in Turkey and gain additional support to decrease its incidence.

11E. Is the country making continual progress toward eliminating the worst forms of child labor:

-- Turkey is making steady progress toward its goal of eliminating all incidences of child labor for children under the age of 15, as well as all incidences of the worst forms of child labor, by 2014. In 2006, ILO identified Turkey as one of three "most successful" countries in eliminating the worst forms of child labor.

-- Turkey's State Statistics Institute conducted a survey on families in 2006, released to the public in 2007, which included some data on child labor. However, the study makes no specific reference to the level of incidence of worst forms of child labor. According to the survey, the number of children in the 6-17 year old age group engaged in economic activity in 2006 was 958,000. Of those, 320,000 were in the 6-14 year old age group, and 638,000 in the 15-17 year old age group. Compared to figures from similar studies conducted in 1994 and 1999, the number of children aged 6-17 engaged in economic activity has steadily decreased (2.27 million in 1994, 1.63 million in 1999, 958,000 in 2006). In percentage terms, whereas 15.2% of Turks aged 6-17 were engaged in some form of work in 1994, that number had decreased to 10.3% in 1999, and 5.9% in 2006.

-- In the 2006 study, just over 40 percent of the total 958,000 children aged 6-17 were engaged in agricultural work, while the remaining 59 percent worked in other undefined sectors of the economy. 53 percent of the children found to be working in the survey did so on a fee-for-service or salaried basis, while 44 percent worked for free or as part of a family business, and 3 percent were self-employed.

-- According to 2006 data, there were 16,264,000 children aged 6-17 in Turkey. 13,772,000 or 84.7% of 6-17 year olds in Turkey attended school. 2,492,000 or 15.3% did not attend school. Of those attending school, 302,000 (or 1.9% of the total age group) were engaged in economic activity, 5,896,000 (or 36.3% of the total age group) engaged in household chores, and 7,574,000 (or 46.6% of the total age group) did not work. Of those not attending school, 656,000 (or 4% of the total age group) engaged in economic activity, 1,106,000 (or 6.8% of the total age group) engaged in household chores, and 730,000 (or 4.5% of the total age group) did not work.

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